



Minangkabau Ancient History and Cultural Communication

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Abstract

This study focuses on history and culture communication the Minangkabau kingdom that located on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia. This kingdom covers the central part of the island of Sumatra. The Minangkabau Malay kingdom was centered on the Batanghari River. The purpose of this study is to explain the role of Minangkabau Malay in world trade and the results of cultural communication. The research method used is historical research methods through library and archive research. It turned out that the Ancient Minangkabau Malay Kingdom had opened cultural relations with India so that there were Hindu and Buddhist influences in Sumatra.

Keywords: Cultural Communication; Hindu-Buddhist; Minangkabau

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1.0 Introduction

This research is a study of the history of the Minangkabau ancient Malay kingdom which was active in the world spice trade. The Minangkabau Malay Kingdom was a kingdom centered in several places, including in Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung. The Dharmasraya Kingdom was on the banks of the Batanghari River, and the Pagaruyung Kingdom was in Luhak Tanah Datar, Minangkabau. The Royal Palace served as the seat of government for Minangkabau Malay kings. The Minangkabau Malay Kingdom by some writers called it the Minangkabau Kingdom (Rusli Amran, 1981). However, from the archaeological findings the kingdom was mentioned as the Pagaruyung Kingdom. The kingdom was centered on Luhak Tanah Datar, a part of Luhak Nan Tigo (Mansoer, M.D. et al., 1970). This research takes a spatial and temporal scope. The spatial scope chosen is the region of the Malay world, especially the area that was influenced by the Ancient Minangkabau Malay Kingdom which had direct contact with India, China and Arabia. The temporal selection in the ancient period was based on the fact that during the ancient period there was a lot of contact between China and India, through the Archipelago or the Malay world, and the occurrence of cultural relations so that Hindu and Buddhist influences entered Sumatra and the Malay world.

The purpose of this study is to reveal the role of the Minangkabau Malay Kingdom in fostering cultural communication relations through trade. Luhak is the conception of the Minangkabau people about their territory and nature in relation to other nations. According to Tambo, a traditional Minangkabau historiography, Minangkabau nature consists of two main areas, namely the luhak nan tigo and rantau areas. The Luhak Nan Tigo area is the central or core area of Minangkabau nature, while the second, rantau is an expansion area and at the same time is a border area that surrounds the central area (Dt. Radjo Pangoeloe, 1971). The method used is the method of historical research, which goes through the stages of heuristics, criticism, interpretation and historiography. The ancient Minangkabau kingdom generally did not leave written evidence because oral tradition was more dominant in Minangkabau, except for the Pagaruyung Kingdom during the reign of Adityawarman. The main remains of the Ancient Pagaruyung Kingdom are in the form of inscriptions, household items, stone seats for deliberations at the Meeting Hall, and so on, as stated in Westenenk (1969). The government in the nagari is held by the Penghulu of the people who have the title Datuk. Nagari is likened to kingdoms that have full autonomy and are still Hindu. A nagari emerged from the clearing of cultivated forest and eventually became a nagari. The first Nagari was Pariangan, Padang Panjang, which is located at the southern foot of Mount Merapi (Navis, 1986).

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2.0 Literature Review

In the book of the "Sejarah Minangkabau", explains the division of Luhak in Minangkabau, the Minangkabau coastal area, the Kelarasan system, the stratification of Minangkabau society, nagari, the entry of Hindu-Buddhist influence, the Dharmasraya Kingdom, the Pagaruyung Kingdom, the entry of Islam in Minangkabau, Tali Tigo Sapilin's role in Minangkabau East in trade, Minangkabau contact with Aceh and Europeans, the Padri War, and Islamic modernization (Muhammad Nur, 2019). Further, in the work of "Sedjarah Minangkabau," the result also explained the structure of Minangkabau society, the prehistoric period of Minangkabau, the beginning of Minangkabau history, the East Minangkabau period, the Pagaruyung kingdom, and Minangkabau relations with Aceh, the Netherlands, and England. Furthermore, this work also discusses the Padri War movement, the development of local nationalism, social and political changes in Minangkabau, the era of Japanese occupation, and the Physical Revolution in Minangkabau (Mansoer, 1970). Mochtar Naim (1979), in his work *Merantau Migration Patterns of the Minangkabau Tribe*, discusses the number of Minangkabau migrants from a historical perspective, Minangkabau people in the rantau, life in the rantau, the factors of migrating, and the effects and prospects of migrating.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Concept

This study uses social science concepts and theories that can be used as problem-analysis tools. The concepts of Minangkabau, Old Malay, Hindu-Buddhist, and cultural communication are concepts of culture, religion, and social relations among the Malay Minangkabau people. These concepts are very helpful in explaining the relationship between Malay Minangkabau and peoples who are very far away, such as India, China, Persia, and Arabia. The ancient Minangkabau Malay kingdom was active in world trade, especially in the spice trade. This trade and shipping were part of the trade between China and India from the beginning of our era. This relationship became busy with India, so the influence of Hinduism and Buddhism that developed in India also had an impact on the archipelago, especially in the area of Ancient Minangkabau. This factor explains the importance of research on the ancient Minangkabau.

The Minangkabau ethnic group, which has a distinct culture because it follows a matrilineal system, supports Minangkabau as a cultural region. The Minangkabau ethnic group inhabits the central part of Sumatras Island, including West Sumatra Province, Indonesia, which consists of geographical, political, economic, and historical cultural units (Mansoer, 1970). The Minangkabau cultural area consists of the Luhak Nan Tigo, Pesisir, and Rantau areas. The ancient history of Minangkabau is the period when Hinduism and Buddhism entered, resulting in the formation of the Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung Kingdoms. The arrival of Islam in Minangkabau in the 14th century marked the end of the ancient Minangkabau period. The Minangkabau Ancient Historical Period continued with the Islamic religious period until the Islamic Renewal and Reformation period (Muhammad Nur, 2019). Cultural communication is an activity between the archipelago and India through trade and shipping. When Chinese silk ships sailed to India, the ships stopped at several spice ports in the archipelago, loaded spices, and then continued on to India. The world of trade between Southeast Asia and India, as well as the Middle East, creates inter-ethnic meetings in the maritime trade area. The result is that cultural communication occurs so that Hindu and Buddhist influences enter the archipelago in general and Minangkabau in particular (Lapian, 1997).

3.2 Theory

Lapian (1979) says that cultural communication occurred between the archipelago and India long before Christ, namely when relations between China and India occurred. Chinese ships paid Minangkabau, which is in central Sumatra, a visit, particularly in Sriwijaya, Muaro Jambi, and Dharmasraya. Minangkabau Malays also traded to India, and this relationship resulted in cultural communication, resulting in the entry of Hindu-Buddhist religion into Minangkabau. Bambang Budi Utomo (2011) explained that Muara Jambi is a complex of Mahayana Buddhist sacred buildings, located on the banks of the Batanghari river, and is part of the Minangkabau cultural area. According to Slamet Muljana (2006), the old Malay kingdom was centred on Sungai Lansek, Siguntur, and Dharmasraya in 1343. Then the centre of the kingdom was moved to the interior of Pagaruyung. The movement was carried out via the Batanghari River. The Batang Kampar waters are considered safer for Adityawarman for trading than the Batang Hari River. Eventually, Adityawarman's territory extended to the east coast of Sumatra, the mouth of the Rokan River, and the mouth of the Batanghari River. The direction to the west includes the west coast of Sumatra, such as Pariaman, Tiku, Barus, Painan, and Indrapura (Mhd. Nur, 2000).

4.0 Findings

The ancient Minangkabau area consisted of several ancient kingdoms scattered in several places, such as the east coast of Sumatra, the west coast of Sumatra, Jambi, parts of Palembang, Dharmasraya, Pagaruyung, Siguntur, Padang Lawas, Pagu River, Indrapura, Talu, and so on. Since 1347 AD, all of these kingdoms have been under the Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung kingdoms, especially during the reign of Adityawarman. Prior to the arrival of Adityawarman in Minangkabau, the Minangkabau Old Malay kingdoms existed at the state level as well as at the level of the Old Malay kingdoms around Jambi and Palembang (Budi Istiawan, 2011). This kingdom opened trade and shipping relations in various directions, for example, to Malacca, India, Persia, and Arabia.

The economic growth of trade and shipping in Minangkabau is the result of cultural communication with India. The popularity of the Minangkabau caused King Kartanegara of the Singosari Kingdom in Java to send an expedition to the Ancient Minangkabau Kingdom of Dharmasraya in 1275 on a mission of peace and mutual relations, which was named the Pamalayu Expedition. This expedition was closely related to the security conditions in the Malay world region and good relations with India, China, Rome, Arabia, and Europe. But

sometimes this relationship becomes less intimate with China because there are indications that China wants to control the ancient kingdoms in Sumatra.

When assigned to Palembang to control the former Sriwijaya region, Adityawarman did well. But finally, he returned to his hometown of Dharmasraya, where his grandfather ruled. Then Adityawarman ruled over the Dharmasraya Kingdom. As the king of the Minangkabau Malays in the ancient period, Adityawarman succeeded in developing the world of trade between west and east, including China, the Archipelago, India, Persia, Arabia, and the Mediterranean, as well as Europe. This relationship opened communication between the Malay world and India, as well as other worlds. The result was the growing influence of India in the Malay world, the Archipelago, and even Asia, especially the influence of Hinduism and Buddhism. Meanwhile, the Mauara Takus temple was also built in the Kampar area of Riau; Padang Rocok Temple in Dharmasraya; Muaro Jambi Temple in Jambi; and several other temples spread across the island of Sumatra.

Shortly after reigning in Dharmasraya, Adityawarman moved the centre of the kingdom to Pagaruyung in the interior of Minangkabau, who had a palace near Saruaso. The Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung kingdoms emerged as Buddhist kingdoms, successors of the Sriwijaya kingdom in Palembang and the Muaro Jambi kingdom in Jambi. The success of the Minangkabau Ancient Malay kingdom in opening trade relations with India, Persia, Arabia, and the Mediterranean made the kingdom so large that the surrounding kingdoms, for example, the Singosari royal family and the Majapahit royal family in Java Island, wanted to join this kingdom. It is also possible that Adityawarman moved to the interior of Pagaruyung in the framework of the kingdom's efforts to occupy the Saruaso Tanah Datar area as a gold producer. Gold has been brought and traded to the west coast of Sumatra Island, such as Padang, Kototangah, Pariaman, and Tiku. Besides that, the Tiku port is very busy with traders visiting it to buy pepper and other commodity goods. These items were highly prized and sought after by Indian, Gujarati, Arab, Egyptian, Persian, Roman, Mediterranean, Chinese, and European traders. (Mhd. Nur, 2000).

In 1345, Adityawarman began to expand his territory in the Malay world, such as towards Kuntu on the banks of the Batang Kampar river to penetrate the road to the Malacca Strait. Batang Kampar waters are considered safer for Adityawarman than Batang Hari. Eventually, Adityawarman's territory extended to the east coast of Sumatra, the mouth of the Rokan River, and the mouth of the Batanghari River. Expansion to the west of Minangkabau includes the west coast of Sumatra, such as Pariaman, Tiku, Airbangis, Barus, Painan, Indrapura, Muko-Muko, and Bengkulu (Mhd. Nur, 2000). The relationship between the Pagaruyung Kingdom and other Malay kingdoms occurred through trade (economy), culture, politics, population movements, and so on. The Malay kingdoms on Sumatra Island carried out trade relations through shipping. The waters in the Malacca Strait and the west coast of Sumatra have become a meeting place, both among themselves and with foreign traders. The Malacca Strait becomes a very busy traffic network and a meeting place for traders from various commercial zones, such as the Bay of Bengal, the Java Sea, the South China Sea, the east coast of the Malay Peninsula, and the Sulu Sea (Hall, 1985). Based on an analysis of the data found, it shows that the world of spice trading and shipping between the Minangkabau Malay world and India greatly influenced Hindu and Buddhist culture, which developed in the archipelago. Cultural communication resulted in the entry of Hindu-Buddhist influences into the archipelago in general and the island of Sumatra in particular. The evidence is the development of Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms on the island of Sumatra, such as Sriwijaya, Muaro Jambi, Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung. These kingdoms left traces of Hindu and Buddhist temples.

Trade between China, Malay Minangkabau, and India has been going on since early AD. Relations between the west coast of Minangkabau and Gujarat have also been smooth because many Gujarati traders trade in Pariaman, Barus, and Tiku. Spices, fragrant woods, camphor, frankincense, and pepper had their way to India and even to the Persian and Roman Empires. The extraordinary impact was that Chinese and Indonesian traders got to know the Hindu-Buddhist culture and religion that developed in India. The cultural influences of these two religions through cultural communication were brought to the Archipelago and China, so that the two religions developed in the Archipelago and the rest of the eastern world.

In the 5th century AD, the Hindu Kingdom of Kutai was established in East Kalimantan; in the 7th century, the Buddhist Kingdom of Sriwijaya was established in the Malay region; and then it reached the Batanghari River in Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung. As Hindu and Buddhist ideas spread into the Minangkabau Malay area, they became even stronger in their ability to control the Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung kingdoms' politics and economies. The ancient kingdom of Minangkabau was also visited by spice traders from Gujarat, India, Persia, Arabia, Egypt, and Europe. The growth of Hindu-Buddhist influence in the Minangkabau Malay world was so strong that it left scars in the form of inscriptions and temple buildings, such as the Muara Takus temple in Kampar, Padang Rocok temple in Dharmasraya, Pulau Sawah temple in Dharmasraya, Pasaman temple in Lubuk Attitude, and so on. Southeast Asia had flourished by the second century AD for both Hinduism and Buddhism.

5.0 Discussion

The relationship between the Minangkabau Malay world and India occurred in ancient times. The relationship stems from the relationship between China and India, which passes through the archipelago. Since ancient times, the archipelago has had trade relations with India and China. The roads between China and India span the routes of China, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh and India. Road connections between China and India have existed since 500 BC. According to D.G.H. Burger, this flat road is the oldest trading road in the world. This route continued to Central Asia, such as Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Rome, Greece, and the Mediterranean Sea (Mediterranean). This road was connected with caravan roads from India. Animal power, such as elephants, horses, and donkeys. For centuries, trade relations between China and India were going well, but then there were disturbances on the way, namely, robberies on roads full of primary jungle. These disruptions persisted, forcing a sea route change for the Chinese silk trade.

Trade routes through the sea from China to India pass through the waters of the Archipelago, the Malacca Strait, the Andaman Sea, the Indian Ocean, India, the Persian Gulf, Syria, and the Mediterranean.

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The Malay Minangkabau kingdom has existed for quite a long time, especially since the ancient period. The kings who ruled in the kingdom adhered to Hinduism and Buddhism. The government of the kings with thrones of power located in the Malay palace, there was also a cultural government led by the princes, who had the title of datuk. Each nagari is led by a prince, and Raja Alam only controls the power to relate to the outside world in trade and cultural communication. The Pagaruyung Kingdom was in charge of several nagari with quite a large number of territories, such as the Minangkabau, Riau, Jambi, Bengkulu, and even Negeri Sembilan in the Malay Peninsula. The world trade area includes China, the Archipelago, India, Persia, Arabia, the Mediterranean, and Europe. An interesting thing in cultural communication between Minangkabau and India is the mixing of Hinduism and Buddhism in Minangkabau, so that the Minangkabau know Hindu-Buddhist religions without having separate beliefs. However, the large temples in Minangkabau are more inclined towards Buddhist beliefs.

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This paper is a study of the socio-economic history of the Mentawai Islands in West Sumatra Province, Indonesia, and is the original work of the writing team.

Paper Contribution Related to Field of Study

This paper contributes to the fields of study of History, Geography, Sociology, and Anthropology

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